Frenchman—and all Frenchmen are patriotic.
Better a doubtful battle in France with a possible victory, than an assured success in Italy with a probable triumph.

Robertson was not quite in the same position as Nivelle. As between Nivelle and Gadorna he had no *Robertson's* prejudices in favour of either. They were *reasons for* both foreigners and consequently needed *opposing* careful watching. His chronic xenophobia *l^m°ff^m* functioned impartially in that respect.
Nivelle he actually disliked, Gadorna at that time he viewed with a certain measure of superior contempt. But the main British Army was in France and Flanders and therefore a territorial advance of a few kilometres there (preferably on Flemish soil) was more desirable than a decision elsewhere.

Later on he rested his opposition to a combined offensive on the Italian Front on the plea that if Austria were broken up by such an attack, Italy would make a separate peace with her beaten enemy and leave us in the lurch, with both Austria and Germany on our hands.* It was an unworthy and unwarrantable insinuation against the honour of a great people.
But the fact that it was in his mind proved that he did not rule out the probability of a complete success for an attack in that quarter.

The French and British Staffs based their objection to concentrating their heaviest blows on the weakest point on the ground that the highest

strategical
principles demanded an attack on the strongest enemy
at his most formidable front. A remarkable doctrine.
Had France and Flanders been the weakest front and
Italy or the Balkans the strongest, Joffre, Nivelle,
Haig and Robertson would have had no difficulty in

* Passchendaele Discussions, Vol. IV.